

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY POR OF SPAIN
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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: XA,CU, UR, MPOL
SUBJECT: JAMAICAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S STATEMENT ON AFRICA

QUOTED BELOW IS VERBATIM TEXT OF FONMIN PATTERSON'S STATEMENT ON
AFRICA MADE TO PARLIAMENT YESTERDAY DURING BUDGET DEBATE:

BEGIN QUOTE: I WISH TO USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO DEAL WITH
ONE IMPORTANT ISSUE WHICH HAS ARISEN SINCE MY REVIEW OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS ISSUES LAST YEAR. I REFER TO THE SITUATION
WHICH THREATENS IN AFRICA.

AS THE HOUSE WILL RECALL, THE JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT TOOK A VERY
CLEAR POSITION WHEN THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT INVITED CUBA TO COME
TO ITS ASSISTANCE IN RESISTING AN INVASION BY SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES
IN 1976. OUR POSITION WAS THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN INVASION WAS A
NAKED AGGRESSION AIMED AT PRESERVING AND SPREADING THE
INFLUENCE OF ITS ABHORRENT APARTHEID REGIME, AND THAT
THE GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA HAD A PERFECT RIGHT TO SEEK EXTERNAL
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ASSISTANCE IN RESISTING THAT THREAT. UNFORTUNATELY, SOME
COUNTRIES HAVE CHOSEN TO SEE THIS ACTION IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT, AND
IT IS IN OUR VIEW REGRETTABLE THAT THE TENSIONS WHICH
FLOWED FROM THIS HAVE EVIDENTLY HAD THE EFFECT OF SLOWING DOWN
THE PROCESS OF RAPPROACHEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA AND CUBA.

EARLIER THIS YEAR THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT INVITED CUBAN ASSISTANCE IN RESISTING AN INVASION BY SOMALI FORCES INTO THE OGADEN REGION OF THE COUNTRY.

BUT HERE TOO THE ACTION WAS GIVEN RISE TO AN INCREASE IN INTERNATIONAL TENSION. ONCE AGAIN FEARS, UNJUSTIFIABLE IN OUR VIEW, HAVE BEEN OPENLY EXPRESSED ABOUT THE DANGER TO WHICH SUCH ACTIONS COULD LEAD; AND THERE HAVE BEEN CHARGES AND COUNTERCHARGES WITHOUT EVEN THE THIN VEIL OF DIPLOMATIC NICETY.

MORE RECENTLY THERE HAS BEEN THE INVASION OF ZAIRE'S SOUTHERN PROVINCE OF SHABA, WHICH WAS PREVIOUSLY KNOWN-- IN THE DAYS OF TSHOMBE--AS KATANGA. FRENCH, BELGIAN AND MOROCCAN TROOPS WERE FLOWN IN AT THE INVITATION OF THE ZAIRE GOVERNMENT TO RESIST THE INVADING FORCES, AND OSTENSIBLY TO PROTECT THE LIVES OF FRENCH AND BELGIAN NATIONALS LIVING IN THE AREA. THIS ACTION HAS LED TO EVEN MORE VEHEMENT CHARGES AND COUNTER CHARGES ABOUT WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INVASIONS, AND ABOUT THE MILITARY RESPONSE TO IT. IN THIS CONTEXT WE NOTE BOTH THE EXPLICIT CUBAN DENIAL OF INVOLVEMENT AND THE POWERFUL AND UNEQUIVOCAL STATEMENT BY NYERERE REPUDIATING THE ACCUSATION THAT CUBA WAS IN ANY WAY RESPONSIBLE FOR OR CONNECTED WITH THE AFFAIR.

SIMILARLY THERE HAVE BEEN CHARGES AND COUNTERCHARGES CONCERNING FRENCH MILITARY ACTION IN CHAD AND IN THE WESTERN SAHARA.
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ALL OF THIS HAS LED TO INCREASING INTERNATIONAL TENSION AND BECOMES A REAL THREAT TO THE WHOLE PROCESS OF DETENTE IN WHICH THE ENTIRE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS SO GREAT A STAKE.

WE ARE NOW FACED WITH A SITUATION IN WHICH THE ENTIRE CONTINENT OF AFRICA COULD BECOME A NEW FIELD OF HEATED CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE MAJOR POWERS, AND IN WHICH THE INTERESTS OF AFRICA ITSELF COULD BECOME OPENLY SUBORDINATED TO "SPHERE OF INFLUENCE" POLICIES. THE LATEST INDICATION OF THIS DANGER IS THE NEWS EMANATING FROM A MEETING OF WESTERN POWERS IN PARIS LAST WEEK OF A PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A PAN-AFRICAN SECURITY FORCE. THIS IDEA IS ONE WHICH SURELY SHOULD EMANATE FROM THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY SINCE COMPETENCE TO DISCUSS THE MATTER OF JOINING SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR AFRICAN COUNTRIES, BUT THERE IS NOT INDICATION THAT THE OAU WAS EVEN CONSULTED.

IF THERE WERE NOT SO MANY DANGERS INHERENT IN THE PROPOSAL AND IF THE MOTIVATION OF SELF-INTEREST WAS NOT SO OBVIOUS I WOULD BE TEMPTED TO DESCRIBE THE IDEA AS LUDICROUS.

THE RECENT MEETING OF WESTERN POWERS IN PARIS
LAST MONTH IS STRANGELY REMINISCENT OF THE BERLIN
CONGRESS IN 1884/85 WHICH LED TO THE PARTITIONING
OF AFRICA. ONE WOULD HAVE THEOURHG THAT IN RECOGNITION
OF THE SOVEREIGN NATIONS OF AFRICA THERE WOULD BE NO
FURTHER ATTEMPT TO DIVIDE THE CONTINENT INTO SHPERES
OF INFLUENCE.

THE GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA STRONGLY DEPLORES ANY
ATTEMPT TO RE-IMPOSE IMPERIALIST INFLUENCES IN A
CONTINENT OF THE FUTURE. WE SHALL LEND OUR VOICE IN
EVERY INTERNATIONAL FORUM TO THE CHORUS OF THOSE WHO
SEEK TO RESIST NEOCOLONIALIST INFLUENCES. THE PAN-
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AFRICAN SECURITY FORCE CAN ONLY BE CREATED BY THE WILL
OF THE AFRICAN COUNTRIES THEMSELVES. WE REGARD THE
PROPOSAL FROM ANY OTHER QUARTER AS UNACCEPTABLE
AND DANGEROUS.

AS IT IS, MR. SPEAKER, I EXPRESS THE HOPE THAT
THE ENTIRE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WILL RECOGNISE
THAT THERE ARE GRAVE DANGERS INPLICIT IN THE PRESENT
SITUATION IN AFRICA; THAT THE SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OF THE
AFRICAN COUNTRIES MUST BE RESPECTED; AND THAT THE TRUE
LIBERATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ALL OF AFRICA, IN WHICH
ALL CAN PLAY A PART, MUST BE THE REAL OBJECTIVE OF
THE INTERESTED PARTIES. END QUOTE.
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